AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) An annular shim member having first and second opposing surfaces and a plurality of openings formed therethrough,

wherein the member is made from a metallic material and at least partly defines a plurality of radially extending gas flow paths for communicating a radially interior side of the member with a radially exterior side of the member, the annular shim member being substantially planar.

2. (Original) The member according to claim 1, wherein the metallic material is a bare metallic material.

3. (Original) The member according to claim 1, wherein the metallic material is a wire mesh.

4. (Original) The member according to claim 3, wherein the metallic material is a refractory material.

5. (Currently amended) The member according to claim 3, wherein the metallic member comprises one or more of stainless steel, ~~inconel~~ a nickel-chromium-based alloy, titanium, molybdenum, tantalum, and tungsten.

6. (Original) The member according to claim 3, wherein the wire mesh has an open mesh area of about 20% to about 80%.

7. (Original) The member according to claim 3, wherein the member has an effective thickness of about 1 mm to about 6 mm.

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TEL. (617) 542-2290
FAX. (617) 451-0313

8. (Original) The member according to claim 3, wherein the wire mesh includes a crimped weave mesh.

9. (Original) The member according to claim 3, wherein the member has an effective thickness of about twice the diameter of the wire constituting the wire mesh.

10. (Original) The member according to claim 4, wherein the refractory material can withstand temperatures of up to about 1400°C.

11. - 22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently amended) An annular shim member having first and second opposing surfaces and a plurality of openings formed therethrough,

wherein the member is made from a metallic material and at least partly defines a plurality of radially extending gas flow paths, the annular shim member being substantially planar.

24. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 23, wherein the metallic material is a bare metallic material.

25. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 23, wherein the metallic material is a wire mesh.

26. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 25, wherein the metallic material is a refractory material.

27. (Currently amended) The member according to claim 25, wherein the metallic member comprises one or more of stainless

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steel, ~~inconel~~ a nickel-chromium-based alloy, titanium, molybdenum, tantalum, and tungsten.

28. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 25, wherein the wire mesh has an open mesh area of about 20% to about 80%.

29. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 25, wherein the member has an effective thickness of about 1 mm to about 6 mm.

30. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 25, wherein the wire mesh includes a crimped weave mesh.

31. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 25, wherein the member has an effective thickness of about twice the diameter of the wire constituting the wire mesh.

32. (Previously presented) The member according to claim 26, wherein the refractory material can withstand temperatures of up to about 1400°C.

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GAGNEBIN & LEBOVICI LLP
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FAX. (617) 451-0313